

St. Cloud VA
UPDATE
April/May/June 2017



A quarterly newsletter for Veterans served by the St. Cloud VA Health Care System, and for those who serve them. Send news items and comments to St. Cloud VA Health Care System, Attn: Public Affairs Officer, 4801 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56303, or via email to barry.venable@va.gov.

St. Cloud VA Gets New Director



The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is pleased to announce the appointment of Stephen D. Black as the new Director of the St. Cloud VA Health Care System.

“We are excited to bring Mr. Black on board as the new director of the St. Cloud VA Health Care System,” said Ms. Jan Murphy, Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 23 director. “His sound leadership qualities and proven experience will be valuable assets for the health care system, the employees, volunteers, and most importantly, for the Veterans we are honored to serve. Mr. Black will begin his appointment on April 2, 2017.”

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Mr. Black has over 18 years health care experience; eight years of progressive clinical, administrative, and executive leadership in Veterans Health Administration (VHA). He has developed partnerships with health care industry leaders outside and within VHA. His most recent permanent assignment has been as Associate Medical Center Director of the Durham VA Health Care System. He has been serving as the Acting Director of the Hampton VA Medical Center since January 9, 2017.

Mr. Black holds a Masters in Science, Physical Therapy degree from the University of Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN and a Bachelor's of Science from Franklin College, Franklin, IN.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The oldest exposed surface on earth is New Zealand's south island.
- There are 1,792 steps to the top of the Eiffel Tower.
- If Texas were a country, it's GNP would be the fifth largest of any country on earth.
- The ZIP in Zip-code stands for Zoning Improvement Plan.
- The world's largest alphabet is Cambodian, with 74 letters.

QUOTE

"Trouble is only opportunity in work clothes."

Henry J. Kaiser (1882 - 1967)

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at <http://www.stcloud.va.gov/>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday, April 1 (9 a.m.-5 p.m.), & Sunday, April 2 (9 a.m.-3 p.m.)—**St. Cloud Gun Show**, River's Edge Convention Center, 10 4th Ave. South, St. Cloud, MN. Stop by and visit the St. Cloud VA booth and find out about eligibility and health care services for Veterans.

Saturday, April 1 (9 a.m.-1 p.m.)—**Delano Community Expo**, Delano High School, 700 Elm Ave. East, Delano, MN. If you live in the Delano area and are looking for something to do on a Saturday, come and visit the St. Cloud VA booth to find out about eligibility and health care services.

Monday, April 3, May 1, & June 5 (8-8:25 a.m.)—Listen to the **Veterans Affairs Radio Show** on KNSI AM 1450/FM 103.3.

Monday, April 3/10/17/24; Tuesday, May 2/9/16/23/30; Tuesday, June 13/20/27; (3-4 p.m.)—**Yoga for Vets Gentle Floor Yoga**, St. Cloud VA. Open to all enrolled Veterans. These classes focus on learning and practicing breathing techniques, calming self-talk, meditations and gentle yoga poses that can be replicated in daily life. Poses are modified for Veterans with specific physical and mental needs to maintain safety yet promote health and wellness. This group is ideal for Veterans who experience stress, anxiety, depression, insomnia, chronic pain and illness, cardiac disease, grief, the demands of caregiving, and difficulty finding balance in life. Note that an ability to get up and down from the floor is required to participate in this class. Contact Kristin Olson, 320-252-1670, ext. 6031, for registration and location information.

Tuesday, April 4; May 2 & May 16; June 6 & June 20 (Noon-2 p.m.)—**Veterans Law Clinic** at the St. Cloud VA in Building 28, Room 126. Free legal consultation for Veterans for Social Security law, housing, consumer, child support, family law, and employment. No criminal law issues will be discussed. Please call 320-253-0138 or 1-800-622-7773 to schedule an appointment.

Tuesday, April 4/11/18/25 (3-4 p.m.)—**Yoga for Vets Chair Yoga**, St. Cloud VA. Open to all enrolled Veterans. These classes focus on learning and practicing breathing techniques, calming self-talk, meditations and yoga poses that can be replicated in daily life. Poses are modified for Veterans with specific physical and mental health needs to maintain safety yet promote health and wellness. This class is ideal for Veterans who experience stress, anxiety, depression, insomnia, chronic pain or who want to improve overall fitness level. In addition, this group is perfect for Veterans who have a hard time getting up and down from the floor. Contact Kristin Olson at 320-252-1670, ext. 6031, for registration and location information.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS, cont.

Wednesday, April 5, April 12, April 19, & April 26 (9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.)—**St. Cloud VA Eligibility Staff in Wright County**, Wright County Veterans Service Office, Wright County Courthouse, 10 2nd Street NW, Room C-114, Buffalo, MN. Staff from the St. Cloud VA will be available to answer health care eligibility questions and assist with applications. Walk-ins welcome, or you may schedule an appointment by calling 763-682-7325. Veterans should bring along service documentation, including:

- a copy of DD214, Armed Forces Report of Discharge
- for World War II Veterans, a copy of both sides of a Discharge Certificate
- knowledge of financial household income from the previous year (tax statements are helpful but not required)
- copies of current insurance cards (including Medicare, Medicaid, or spousal insurance if it covers the Veteran). Veterans do not need to have insurance to enroll.

Thursday, April 6 (8 a.m.-Noon)—**Health and Fitness Senior Fair**, Whitney Senior Center, 1527 Northway Drive, St. Cloud. Health is in bloom at Whitney! A wide variety of vendors will provide the most up-to-date health, fitness and wellness practices. Sample healthy snacks, enjoy a free massage, and discover new ways to be active. Health screenings will be available for diabetes risk, oral cancer, blood pressure, memory, weight, nutrition, hearing and balance. Be sure to stop by the St. Cloud VA booth to discuss health care, eligibility and Veterans benefits. Event is FREE and open to the public.

Thursday, April 6 (9 a.m.-5 p.m.)—**Greater St. Cloud Talent Summit**, River's Edge Convention Center, 10 4th Ave. South, St. Cloud, MN. Looking for a promising career in health care taking care of Veterans? Make sure and stop by the St. Cloud VA booth. The Talent Summit is a one-day conference providing an opportunity for business to attract local talent and for job seekers to connect with St. Cloud employers, strengthening the greater St. Cloud community. Visit the [Greater St. Cloud Talent Summit](#) website to view presentation times and more details.

Thursday, April 6; June 29; July 13/20/27; August 3/10/24/31 (3-4:15 p.m.)—**Warriors at Ease Chair Yoga with iRest Yoga Nidra**, St. Cloud VA. Open to all enrolled Veterans. The purpose of this meditative practice is to help Veterans live a contented life free of conflict, anxiety, fear and dissatisfaction. iRest Yoga Nidra accomplishes this in two ways. First, it releases negative body sensations, emotions, beliefs and stress which give rise to self-destructive pattern. Next, it aids the Veteran in recognizing their underlying peace of mind that is always present throughout the changing circumstances of life. This Integrative and Restorative practice lasts 20 minutes and is included at the end of both Warriors at Ease Chair and Floor Yoga classes. Contact Bev Soukup at 320-252-1670, ext. 6322, for registration and location information.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS, cont.

Saturday, April 8 (8 a.m.-1 p.m.)—**Annandale Area Business Expo**, Annandale Senior High School Commons/Gym, 855 Hemlock Street, Annandale, MN. On hand will be over 100 businesses to give demonstrations and to answer questions as well as food and entertainment. Free event. Stop by the St. Cloud VA booth and learn about health care eligibility and services for Veterans.

Monday, April 10 (7-8 p.m.)—**Foley Benefits Briefing**, American Legion, 131 4th Avenue, Foley, MN. Benton County Veterans Service Office and St. Cloud VA staff will be giving a presentation and discussing Veterans benefits and health care. This event is FREE and open to the public.

Tuesday, April 11 (4-7 p.m.)—**St. Cloud Area Business Showcase** at River's Edge Convention Center, 10 4th Ave. South, St. Cloud, MN. Business Showcase features 90 booths all under one roof. Food samples, games and door prizes available. Stop by the St. Cloud VA booth and learn about health care eligibility and services for Veterans.

Tuesday, April 18 (10 a.m.-3 p.m.)—**Free Drop-In Legal Clinic for Veterans** at the St. Cloud VA in the Auditorium (Bldg. 8). Attorneys, MACV staff, County Veterans Service Officers, and child support officers will be available throughout the day to assist Veterans with questions, legal forms and counsel. For more information, contact MACV at 651-200-4750.

Wednesday, April 19, May 17, & June 21 (8:10-8:45 a.m.)—Listen to **Voices for Veterans Radio Show** on WJON AM 1240.

Thursday, April 20/27; May 4/18/25; June 1/8/15 (3-4:15 p.m.)--**Warriors at Ease Gentle Floor Yoga with iRest Yoga Nidra**. Open to all enrolled Veterans. The purpose of this meditative practice is to help Veterans live a contented life free of conflict, anxiety, fear and dissatisfaction. iRest Yoga Nidra accomplishes this in two ways. First, it releases negative body sensations, emotions, beliefs and stress which give rise to self-destructive pattern. Next, it aids the Veteran in recognizing their underlying peace of mind that is always present throughout the changing circumstances of life. This Integrative and Restorative practice lasts 20 minutes and is included at the end of both Warriors at Ease Chair and Floor Yoga classes. Contact Bev Soukup at 320-252-1670, ext. 6322, for registration and location information.

Thursday, April 20 (8 a.m.-11 a.m.)—**Veterans Retiree Breakfast**, Camp Ripley Hanger Conference Center, 15000 HWY 115, Little Falls, MN. Are you a retired Veteran living in Central Minnesota? If so, join us for the Veterans Retiree Breakfast. While at the breakfast be sure to stop by the St. Cloud VA and Morrison County Veterans Service Office booth to learn about health care, eligibility and benefits.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS, cont.

Friday, April 21 (10 a.m.-2 p.m.)—**Veterans Job Preparation Fair**, St. Cloud VA, Auditorium (Bldg. 8). Perfect your elevator pitch, participate in mock interviews, receive a free suit or interview attire, get a free haircut (hair must be clean), and a free manicure kit. Prepares you for the **Veterans Job Fair** on May 5 from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Auditorium.

Saturday, April 22 (9 a.m.-Noon)—**St. Cloud VA Nursing & Clinical Career Fair**, Rasmussen College, 226 Park Avenue South, St. Cloud, MN. To meet increasing demand for services by Veterans the St. Cloud VA needs to fill numerous job openings, and is hosting a career fair for nursing and clinical occupations. The career fair features an introductory session designed to educate applicants on the federal hiring process, and VA staff will be available to assist people with understanding the process. Pre-registration is not required. Attendees are encouraged to bring a copy of their resume or CV, and a laptop computer or tablet so they can set up an account in the electronic hiring system during the event. Computers are available for those without portable devices. Information on benefits, advancements, pay scales, and the VA boarding process will be available at the career fair. For more information on the career fair contact Mandi Loxterkamp at 320-252-1670, ext. 6571, or Elaine Eckstrom, at 320-252-1670, ext. 7276. A current list of job openings is available at <https://www.usajobs.gov>.

Saturday, April 22 (10 a.m.-2 p.m.)—**Campaign to Change Direction of Mental Health Culture**, VFW Post 3839, 3341 Veterans Street, Jenkins, MN. VFW Post #3839 is hosting an open house featuring the Brainerd area health and mental health organizations to assist Veterans in seeking out services to improve their mental health wellness. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be available to answer questions about eligibility and health care services.

Monday, April 24; Tuesday, April 25; & Wednesday, April 26 (10 a.m.-2 p.m.)—**Clothesline Project**, St. Cloud VA Auditorium (Bldg. 8). The Clothesline Project is a way for those affected by sexual assault to express their emotions by decorating a shirt. The shirt is then hung on a clothesline to be viewed by others as testimony to the problem of Sexual Assault. For more information on the Clothesline Project or to decorate a shirt please contact Joy Finkelson, MST Coordinator, at 320-252-1670, ext. 6398, or Julie Wolf, Program Support Assistant, at 320-252-1670, ext. 7511.

Tuesday, April 25 (9 a.m.-2 p.m.)—**Brainerd Stand Down**, Brainerd Armory, 1115 Wright Street, Brainerd, MN. Stand Down is a collaborative community event that provides supplies and services to homeless Veterans. Stop by the St. Cloud VA booth to learn about VA health care, benefits and eligibility.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS, cont.

Tuesday, April 25 (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)—**Spring Senior Fair**, Cambridge City Center Mall, 140 Buchanan Street North, Cambridge, MN. This is a great opportunity to learn about the wide array of products and services offered for the Cambridge community. Prime Time Singers will perform at 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. Lunch options available at SAC's and at the City Center Market. Stop by the St. Cloud VA booth and find out about health care eligibility and services available to Veterans.

Friday, April 28 (9 a.m.-2 p.m.)—**St. Cloud Stand Down**, National Guard Armory, 1710 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud, MN. Stand Down is a collaborative community event that provides supplies and services to homeless Veterans. Stop by the St. Cloud VA booth to learn about VA health care, benefits and eligibility.

Monday, May 1/8/15/22; June 12/19/26 (3-4 p.m.)—**Yoga for Vets Restorative Yoga**, St. Cloud VA. Open to all enrolled Veterans. These classes focus on allowing a person to completely rest. Props are used to help hold your body in each pose, so that your muscles can completely release. This provides a completely supportive environment for total relaxation. The more your body is supported in the poses, the deeper the sense of relaxation. To allow time for your body to release, each pose is held for approximately 10 minutes, allowing for only 3 poses during each class. This practice can be useful for people with chronic pain and illness, anxiety, stress, depression, PTSD, insomnia, and more. Contact Kristin Olson, 320-252-1670, ext. 6031, for registration and location information.

Friday, May 5 (10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.)—**Veterans Job Fair**, St. Cloud VA, Auditorium (Bldg. 8). All Veterans welcome. No pre-registration needed. Meet employers that want to hire you! Contact is Brad Steele at 320-333-0222.

Tuesday, May 9 (6-7:30 p.m.)—**Recovery Night**, St. Cloud VA, Auditorium (Bldg. 8). Veterans, family members, community partners and community members are invited to hear stories of hope and attend a Recovery Resource Fair with information that supports mental health recovery. Contact is Voni Hovland, 320-252-1670, ext. 7729.

Saturday, May 20 (8 a.m.-Noon)—**A to Z Run/Walk**, Cokato-Dassel High School, 4852 Reardon Ave. SW, Cokato, MN. There will be a mental health resource fair during and after this event. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be available to discuss health care services and eligibility for Veterans.

Monday, May 29—**Outpatient Clinics Closed for Federal Holiday**. St. Cloud VA Health Care System outpatient clinics and administrative offices, including VA Clinics in Brainerd, Montevideo and Alexandria will be closed in observance of Memorial Day, a federal holiday. The Urgent Care Clinic at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center will be open. Hours of operation for the Urgent Care Clinic are 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week, including federal holidays. The Community Living Center and residential treatment programs will be open.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS, cont.

Monday, May 29—**Memorial Day Parade/Ceremony**, St. Cloud VA. Parade begins at 10:30 a.m. and runs from Building 111 to Building 92. Ceremony follows the parade, and the guest speaker is Jim Kampsen, CSM (Retired) Army/Chief of Voluntary Service.

Tuesday, June 6 (5-6 p.m.)—**Town Hall Meeting**, VFW Post 936, 1102 3rd Ave East, Alexandria, MN. The town hall meeting is intended to provide Veterans served by the St. Cloud VA Health Care System an opportunity to hear from and have concerns addressed by St. Cloud VA officials. Recognizing Douglas County and surrounding area Vietnam-era Veterans is the first item on the agenda at the town hall meeting. The St. Cloud VA Health Care System, a Commemorative Partner in the national Vietnam War Commemoration, is committed to publicly thanking and honoring Vietnam Veterans and their families. Vietnam Veterans and families desiring to participate in the Commemoration event can simply show up and check in at the designated table. To learn more about the Vietnam War Commemoration, visit <http://www.vietnamwar50th.com/>. Additionally, beginning at 4 p.m., County Veteran Services and VA staff will be available to discuss enrollment in VA health care and provide information on the full range of Veterans benefit programs.

Sunday, June 25 (9 a.m.-3 p.m.)—**Red Bull Military Appreciation**, Central Park, North Branch, MN. Event includes a silent auction, food vendors, military support organizations, Veterans services, car show, military vehicles and kids' activities. Free and open to the public. Stop by the St. Cloud VA booth and learn about health care eligibility and services for Veterans.



We're not just health care professionals.

We're inventing a new model of Veterans health care.

St. Cloud VA Nursing & Clinical

CAREER FAIR

Saturday, April 22, 2017

9 a.m. to noon

Rasmussen College

226 Park Avenue South

St. Cloud, MN 56301

*(Located at the SW corner of MN Hwy. 15 and
MN Hwy. 23)*

Special Event at 9:30 A.M.!
"VA 101" Job Application
Seminar

*Computer lab available on site to create
a USAJobs account, or bring your own
laptop or tablet!*

- ♦ Bring your CV or Resume: Depart with a step-by-step guide to complete an application profile in our hiring system.
- ♦ Shop clinical departments for the job which suits you!
- ♦ HR Staff on-site to answer your questions.
- ♦ Info on benefits, advancements, pay scales, boarding process and more!
- ♦ On the spot interviews will be held for various current open positions. Visit www.usajobs.gov for information on open positions.

For more information contact:

Mandi Loxterkamp

320.252.1670 Ext.6571

Elaine Eckstrom

320.252.1670 Ext.7276



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
St. Cloud VA Health Care System

St. Cloud VA Career Fair Scheduled

To meet increasing demand for services by Veterans the St. Cloud VA needs to fill numerous job openings, and is hosting a career fair for nursing and clinical occupations on **April 22, from 9 a.m. to noon, at Rasmussen College, 226 Park Avenue South, in St. Cloud.**

“To continue to effectively deliver the care our Veterans need, we are seeking qualified individuals to fill immediate job openings for medical and mental health providers, nurses, and nursing assistants in all of our clinical settings,” said Acting Director Mark Aberle.

Many VA jobs are exempted from the federal hiring freeze.

“We are also offering on-the-spot interviews for clinical positions,” Aberle said.

While there are openings in many areas, the career fair is focused on the full range of nursing roles, Aberle added.

The career fair features an introductory session designed to educate applicants on the federal hiring process, and VA staff will be available to assist people with understanding the process.

“Our goals are for each attendee to understand the process of completing an application profile in the VA hiring system, and to be able to shop among our departments for a job that suits them,” Aberle said.

Pre-registration is not required. Attendees are encouraged to bring a copy of their resume or CV, and a laptop computer or tablet so they can set up an account in the electronic hiring system during the event. Computers are available for those without portable devices.

Information on benefits, advancements, pay scales, and the VA boarding process will be available at the career fair.

VA careers offer salaries and comprehensive benefits comparable to the private sector. But, VA has something that no other health care system does: the opportunity to serve Veterans. As the largest health care system in the U.S., the career opportunities are endless, matched with the fulfillment that comes with caring for these brave men and women.

For more information on the career fair contact Mandi Loxterkamp at 320-252-1670, Ext. 6571, or Elaine Eckstrom, at 320-252-1670, Ext. 7276.

A current list of job openings is available at <https://www.usajobs.gov>.

Remodeled Dining Area and Entrance Now Open

The remodeled and expanded section of the Canteen dining area is now open to include access into the Canteen from the parking areas. This completes Phase 2 of the Canteen project. Phase 1 was the remodeling of the kitchen, which is complete. Phase 3 will be the remodeling of the serving line and Phases 4 and 5 involve construction of new restrooms and the new Retail Store. Stop by and check out the newer, more spacious Canteen dining area!

Take a peek at the new, expanded dining areas:





The Clothesline Project and Overcoming Sexual Trauma
April 24 – 26, 2017
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
St. Cloud VA Auditorium (Bldg. 8)

The Clothesline Project (CLP) is a program started in Cape Cod, MA in 1990 to address issues of Sexual Assault. It is a way for those affected by this trauma to express their emotions by decorating a shirt. The shirt is then hung on a clothesline to be viewed by others as testimony to the problem of Sexual Assault.

This visual display raises awareness of military sexual trauma, sexual trauma, and sexual abuse. Male and female Veterans design shirts that reflect their experience of sexual trauma and recovery to “Break the Silence” that can often surround these experiences. Designing a shirt allows Veterans to speak up about experiences they may have previously kept silent. Completed shirts are then hung side-by-side to bear witness to the impact sexual violence has had on their lives.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is concerned about sexual violence because we know that any type of trauma can have lasting effects on a person’s physical and mental health. We also know that people can recover from trauma. The St. Cloud VA HCS is here to help!

For more information on the Clothesline Project or to decorate a shirt please contact Joy Finkelson, MST Coordinator, at 320-252-1670 ext. 6398 or Julie Wolf, Program Support Assistant, at 320-252-1670 ext. 7511.

T-shirts generously provided by the Ladies Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars

[illegible]

So, what is the appeal? For starters, yoga works! Elite athletes use it to improve performance, and everyday humans simply use it to improve physical fitness.

The St. Cloud VA offers a variety of yoga classes, including chair yoga and gentle floor yoga, providing opportunities for people of all ability levels to get involved. Yoga class types include:

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- *Floor Yoga: These classes focus on learning and practicing breathing techniques, calming self-talk, meditations and gentle yoga poses that can be replicated in daily life. Poses are modified for Veterans with specific physical and mental needs to maintain safety yet promote health and wellness. This group is ideal for Veterans who experience stress, anxiety, depression, insomnia, chronic pain and illness, cardiac disease, grief, the demands of caregiving, and difficulty finding balance in life. Note that an ability to get up and down from the floor is required to participate in this class.*
- *Restorative Yoga: These classes focus on allowing a person to completely rest. Props are used to help hold your body in each pose, so that your muscles can completely release. This provides a completely supportive environment for total relaxation. The more your body is supported in the poses, the deeper the sense of relaxation. To allow time for your body to release, each pose is held for approximately 10 minutes, allowing for only 3 poses during each class. This practice can be useful for people with chronic pain and illness, anxiety, stress, depression, PTSD, insomnia, and more.*
- *iRest Yoga Nidra: The purpose of this meditative practice is to help Veterans live a contented life free of conflict, anxiety, fear and dissatisfaction. iRest Yoga Nidra accomplishes this in two ways. First, it releases negative body sensations, emotions, beliefs and stress which give rise to self-destructive pattern. Next, it aids the Veteran in recognizing their underlying peace of mind that is always present throughout the changing circumstances of life. This Integrative and Restorative practice lasts 20 minutes and is included at the end of both Warriors @ Ease Chair and Floor Yoga classes.*

Residential Veterans have several opportunities to participate in yoga as well as Tai chi. Please contact Recreation Therapist Leah Egan at 320-252-1670, ext. 6180, for more information.

The following classes are open to all enrolled Veterans. Classes are held in different locations of the St. Cloud VA Medical Center and with different class leaders. Contact the class leader listed for specific locations. While we want to serve everyone, class sizes are necessarily limited, so enroll early and attend regularly! Here is the schedule of classes as well as information on how to sign up:

Warriors at Ease Chair Yoga with iRest Yoga Nidra

Thursday from 3 – 4:15 p.m., April 6

Contact Bev Soukup at 320-252-1670, ext. 6322.

Yoga for Vets Gentle Floor Yoga

Mondays from 3 - 4 p.m., April 3, 10, 17, & 24

Contact Kristin Olson at 320-252-1670, ext. 6031.

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Yoga for Vets Chair Yoga

Tuesdays from 3 - 4 p.m., April 4, 11, 18, & 25

Contact Kristin Olson at 320-252-1670, ext. 6031.

Warriors at Ease Gentle Floor Yoga with iRest Yoga Nidra

Thursdays from 3 – 4:15 p.m., April 20 & 27; May 4, 18, & 25; June 1, 8, & 15

Contact Bev Soukup at 320-252-1670, ext. 6322.

Yoga for Vets Gentle Floor Yoga

Tuesdays from 3 - 4 p.m., May 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30; June 13, 20, & 27

Contact Kristin Olson at 320-252-1670, ext. 6031.

Yoga for Vets Restorative Yoga



Mondays from 3 - 4 p.m., May 1, 8, 15, & 22; June 12, 19, & 26

Contact Kristin Olson at 320-252-1670, ext. 6031.

Warriors at Ease Chair Yoga with iRest Yoga Nidra



Thursdays from 3 – 4:15 p.m., June 29; July 13, 20, 27; August 3, 10, 24, & 31.

Contact Bev Soukup at 320-252-1670, ext. 6322.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
St. Cloud VA Health Care System

Restorative Yoga



Feeling **stressed** or **overwhelmed**? Experiencing symptoms of **depression** or **anxiety**?

The antidote is relaxation.

Restorative Yoga is a style of yoga which utilizes props to hold your body, so you can more easily obtain a state of deep relaxation. Relaxation is a state in which there is stillness, effortlessness, and the mind becomes quiet. Blankets, bolsters, straps, and other props safely support the body in various postures. The more your body is supported, the deeper the relaxation.

In these gentle restorative sessions, the postures are held for a long period of time allowing the body time to release tension. Each class will begin with gentle stretches. Once the body is open, we will transition into longer held restorative poses, ending with a final resting posture.

St. Cloud VA Health Care System
MONDAYS, 3-4PM
Starts May 1st

Veterans need a Recreation Therapy Yoga Consult from their provider.

For more information, contact:

Kristin Olson, CTRS, RYT 500, AYS 320-252-1670 X6031

MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY



Monday, May 29, 2017

10:30 a.m. – Parade

St. Cloud VA Health Care System

Building 111 to Building 92

11:00 a.m. - Memorial Day Service

**Jim Kampsen, CSM (Retired) Army/Chief of
Voluntary Service Guest Speaker**

The St. Cloud VA Health Care System will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, disability, age, marital status, public assistance status, familial status or sexual orientation. Upon request, accommodations will be provided to allow people with disabilities to participate in all VA programs and activities.

New Regulations for Outpatient Medication Copay



VA amended its regulation on copayments for Veterans' outpatient medications for non-service connected conditions effective February 27, 2017. VA previously charged non-exempt Veterans either \$8 or \$9 for each 30-day or less supply of outpatient medication.

This new regulation eliminated the formula used to calculate future rate increases and established three classes of outpatient medications identified as Tier 1, Preferred Generics; Tier 2, Non-Preferred Generics including over-the-counter medications; and Tier 3, Brand Name. Copayment amounts for each tier are fixed and vary depending upon the class of outpatient medication in the tier.

These copayment amounts are as follows:

\$5 for a 30-day or less supply - Tier 1 outpatient medication

\$8 for a 30-day or less supply - Tier 2 outpatient medication

\$11 for a 30-day or less supply - Tier 3 outpatient medication

These changes apply to Veterans without a service-connected condition, or Veterans with a disability rated less than 50 percent who are receiving outpatient treatment for a non-service connected condition, and whose annual income exceeds the limit set by law. Medication copayments do not apply to former Prisoners of War, catastrophically disabled Veterans, or those covered by other exceptions as set by law.

Copayments stop each calendar year for Veterans in [Priority Groups 2-8](#) once a \$700 cap is reached.

More information on the new tiered medication copayment can be found at:
<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-12-12/pdf/2016-29515.pdf>

Youth Volunteer Opportunities Available at St. Cloud VA

The St. Cloud VA Health Care System is currently seeking young people to participate in our Summer Youth Volunteer Program.

This fulfilling experience is open to anyone 13 years of age and older by June 1, 2017, and who can commit to a recurring schedule this summer.

The program enables students to serve Veterans while building new skills, gaining valuable work experience, making new friends and creating a lasting contribution in their community. Volunteering is a great way to gain valuable experience for college and future careers; scholarship potential exists for some volunteers who qualify.

Many different assignments are available in areas including but not limited to: escort service, pharmacy, recreation therapy, adult day health care, Veterans Canteen Service, music therapy, and entertainment and companion services.

To obtain an application package or to ask questions, please contact St. Cloud VA HCS Voluntary Service at (320) 255-6365 or email VHASTCVAVSSTAFF@va.gov.

Applications are due by May 15, 2017.

st. Cloud VA Health Care System Summer Youth Volunteer Program

Assignments are available in a variety of areas to include:

Pharmacy	Escort Service
Administrative Areas	Adult Day Health Care
Recreation Therapy	
Veterans Canteen Service	Ambassador & Coffee Service
& More!	



Contact Voluntary Service at **320-255-6365** to receive an application package and for submission instructions.

STUDENT VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

- Age qualification - 13 years old by June 1, 2017
- Obtain written Parental Consent
- Complete Application Package- must be received in Voluntary Service by **May 15, 2017**
- Complete the Interview Process with Voluntary Service (new volunteers)
- Completion of Parent Orientation and Volunteer Orientation sessions (new volunteers)
- Commit to a recurring schedule
- Provide own transportation – St. Cloud Metro Transit offers free bus rides for students

STUDENT VOLUNTEER REWARDS

- Gain valuable work experience
- Develop new interests
- Explore future career options
- Personal satisfaction
- Make new friends
- Share your skills and talents
- Apply for scholarships
- Recognition Party



Vietnam Veteran Recognition & Veterans Town Hall Meeting



**June 6, 2017
5 p.m.**

Beginning at 4 p.m., County Veteran Services and VA staff will be available to discuss enrollment in VA health care and provide information on the full range of Veteran benefit programs.

**VFW Post 936
Located at:
1102 3rd Ave East
Alexandria, MN**

Recognizing Douglas County and surrounding area Vietnam-era Veterans (Veterans who served anytime between Nov 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975, regardless of location) is the first item on the agenda at the town hall meeting. The St. Cloud VA Health Care System, a Commemorative Partner in the national Vietnam War Commemoration, is committed to publicly thanking and honoring Vietnam-era Veterans and their families. Vietnam Veterans and families desiring to participate in the Commemoration event can simply show up and check in at the designated table. To learn more about the Vietnam War Commemoration, visit <http://www.vietnamwar50th.com/>.



Integrity Commitment Advocacy Respect Excellence

VA Takes Pride in Serving Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Veterans

VA recognizes and respects that many Veterans with different needs come to the VA. LGBT Veterans face increased health risks and unique challenges in accessing quality health care. The VA strives to be a national leader in the provision of health care to LGBT Veterans and assure that care is provided in a sensitive, safe environment at VA health facilities nationwide.

Veteran Health Administration's commitment to LGBT Veterans includes:

- Promoting a welcoming health and work environment that is inclusive of LGBT Veterans and employees.
- Providing information, guidance and education to VHA providers about LGBT health issues.
- Providing policy recommendations, provider-education programs, and clinical services to support personalized, pro-active, patient-driven healthcare for LGBT Veterans.
- Ensuring there is a formal LGBT point of contact (LGBT Veteran Care Coordinators or LGBT VCCs) at each VA facility.

The LGBT VCC for the St. Cloud VA is Annette Mason, 320-252-1670, extension 6749.

The LGBT VCC for VA Midwest Health Care Network (VISN 23) is Charity Hovre, 320-255-6304.

Coming Soon!

We'll Ask...We Hope You'll Tell

Background:

Sometime in 2017, VA Veteran health records will require new demographic information be collected in order to provide services tailored to Veteran needs. This information, like age and ethnicity, helps VA understand the Veterans we serve, and the services they need.

Self-identified gender identity (SIGI) is a new field and refers to how Veterans think about their gender. Veterans may choose from a set of responses which includes Male, Female, Transman, Transwoman, Other, or Individual chooses not to answer

Why is this information important? How will this information be used?

Information about **birth sex** and **SIGI**, like age and ethnicity, helps VA understand the Veterans we serve and the services they need. For example, Veterans who have a *male birth sex* have different health concerns and need different treatments from Veterans who have a *female birth sex*. Similarly, Veterans' health concerns and treatments also differ by gender identity. Knowing a Veteran's gender identity helps us treat that Veteran with respect across the whole VA system.

How will this information be collected?

The new birth sex and SIGI fields appear in the demographics section of VA records. When Veterans enroll or update their information they will see these questions. While a response is mandatory, Veterans may select “Individual chooses to not answer” for the gender identity field.

Veterans can provide **birth sex** and **SIGI** information in one or more ways, such as:

- at the time of initial enrollment with VA, whether in person or online
- during an in person encounter when VA staff verify/update information in the system
- via data entry at a kiosk or online

Documentation in Medical Records:

St. Cloud VA Health Care System maintains the confidentiality of information about sexual orientation and sexual behavior, as it does with all other private health information.

IMPORTANT: Updating birth sex and gender identity will not result in a change in service connection or loss of other benefits.

For more information and resources, check out the LGBT Program information at the St. Cloud VA website:

[http://www.stcloud.va.gov/services/Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender LGBT Program.asp](http://www.stcloud.va.gov/services/Lesbian_Gay_Bisexual_Transgender_LGBT_Program.asp)

St. Cloud VA Earns “Leader in LGBTQ Healthcare Equality” Title *Nationwide, only 300 healthcare providers earned designation*

St. Cloud VA Health Care System has achieved “Leader in LGBTQ Healthcare Equality” designation from the Human Rights Campaign Foundation (HRC), the educational arm of the nation’s largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) civil rights organization. The designation was reported in the 10th edition of the [Healthcare Equality Index \(HEI\)](#), reflecting on a decade of progress in LGBTQ healthcare. A record 590 healthcare facilities actively participated in the HEI 2017 survey. In addition to active survey participants, the HRC Foundation proactively researched key policies at more than 900 non-participating hospitals. Of all those included in the HEI, 302 earned a “Leader in LGBTQ Healthcare Equality” designation.

“We are proud that St. Cloud VA has achieved “Leader in LGBTQ Healthcare Equality” designation for four consecutive years. All Veterans eligible for VA health care deserve to receive high quality, compassionate care,” said Breeze Hennes, LGBT Special Emphasis Program Manager at the St. Cloud VA.

[The 10th edition of the HEI](#) implements new criteria that raise the bar on what it takes to earn HRC’s “Leader in LGBTQ Healthcare Equality” designation. For the first time ever, HEI participants are given scores in four criteria that represent how many policies and best practices from each section they have implemented: foundational elements of LGBTQ patient-centered care, LGBTQ Patient Services and Support, Employee Benefits and Policies, and LGBTQ Patient and Community Engagement. Participants that receive the maximum score in each section for a total score of 100 points earn the coveted status of “2017 Leader in LGBTQ Healthcare Equality.”

In the 2017 report, an impressive 302 facilities -- 51 percent of those actively participating in the survey -- met the more challenging criteria to earn this designation. Another 145 facilities earned the “Top Performer” designation for scoring from 80 to 95 points. With 76 percent of actively-participating facilities scoring 80 points or more, it is clear that healthcare facilities are going beyond the basics in adopting policies and practices in LGBTQ care.

Of the hospitals who did not participate in the HEI but were scored based on research, only 61 percent have policies that include both “sexual orientation” and “gender identity,” and only 52 percent were found to have an LGBTQ-inclusive employment non-discrimination policy. The equal visitation policy, at 95 percent, is the only one that comes close to matching the rate of the participating facilities.

VA's Rule Establishes Presumption of Service Connection

Camp Lejeune

The Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) regulations to establish presumptions for the service connection of eight diseases associated with exposure to contaminants in the water supply at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, became effective March 14, 2017.

"Establishing these presumptions is a demonstration of our commitment to care for those who have served our nation and have been exposed to harm as a result of that service," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Dr. David J. Shulkin. "The Camp Lejeune presumptions will make it easier for those Veterans to receive the care and benefits they earned."

The presumption of service connection applies to active-duty, reserve and National Guard members who served at Camp Lejeune for a minimum of 30 days (cumulative) between Aug. 1, 1953, and Dec. 31, 1987, and are diagnosed with any of the following conditions:

- Adult leukemia
- Aplastic anemia and other myelodysplastic syndromes
- Bladder cancer
- Kidney cancer
- Liver cancer
- Multiple myeloma
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Parkinson's disease

The area included in this presumption is all of Camp Lejeune and Marine Corps Air Station New River, including satellite camps and housing areas.

This presumption complements the health care already provided for 15 illnesses or conditions as part of the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012. The Camp Lejeune Act requires VA to provide health care to Veterans who served at Camp Lejeune, and to reimburse family members or pay providers for medical expenses for those who resided there for not fewer than 30 days between Aug. 1, 1953, and Dec. 31, 1987.

Veterans Health ID Card

Make sure you are using the more secure Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC) that became available in 2014. The card, used for identification and check-in at your VA appointments, provides increased security for your personal information – no personally identifiable information is contained on the magnetic stripe or barcode.

Ask the clerk at your next appointment how to upgrade your card. Once the updated VHIC is received, old cards should be destroyed by cutting or shredding.

Take the time to ensure your personal information is secure!

OLD CARD:



NEW, MORE SECURE VHIC:



Veterans: Your VA Copayment Debt Options

VA offers a wide range of services to support Veterans including financial assistance options to pay copayments associated with VA health care. Veterans are responsible for those copayments and if not paid in a timely manner will be referred to the Department of Treasury for collection. However, if at any time Veterans are unable to make their copayments, VA can help with arrangements to include repayment plans and other debt relief options such as a compromise or waiver.

VA will also consider temporary or permanent eligibility changes to accommodate a Veteran's financial situation. Veterans are encouraged to contact VA directly to make payment arrangements within 120 days from the date the charge is applied to the account.

VA's current billing process provides Veterans with three monthly billing statements in an attempt to collect copayments. If a Veteran receives VA benefit payments, VA may use these benefit payments to collect any unpaid delinquent copayment debt. If a Veteran does not have any VA benefit payments, the debt is referred to the Department of the Treasury Debt Management Service at 120 days for collection action. At this point, Treasury will issue an official notification letter to Veterans to make payment arrangements and if arrangements are not made, Treasury will begin collection actions.

These collection actions could include any eligible Federal payments including income tax refunds, Social Security benefits, retirement pay, and certain other Federal or State payments. Treasury can also collect the debt from civilian salaries through administrative wage garnishment or they can collect the debt through private collection agencies. Once a debt is referred to Treasury, VA can no longer accept payments for that debt.

VA will work with Veterans to manage their financial responsibilities and assist in making arrangements to avoid collection actions; however, Veterans must contact VA to request assistance. Veterans who have questions about their copayment obligations are encouraged to contact the Facility Revenue Office at their local medical center, or call the Health Resource Center's toll-free number listed at the top of their monthly billing statement.

As always, Veterans have the right to dispute a debt and will continue to receive health care services from VA regardless of their ability to pay assessed copayment charges.





celebrating 10 Years!

Saturday, May 20th, 2017
St. Joseph, MN

9:45AM – Opening Ceremonies

10:00AM – 5k Run/Walk/Wheel

11:00AM – Kids 1k Fun Run

11:30AM – Awards Ceremony

Food and beverage vendors on site.

Registration & sponsorship information at:

WWW.THEOLDGLORYRUN.COM

** Sponsored by Department of Minnesota, Disabled American Veterans. This material is provided solely as an information service to Veterans. Inclusion in Update does not constitute endorsement, support, or sponsorship of any kind by the St. Cloud VA HCS or VA. Questions about this event or program should be directed to the point of contact listed.*

National Veterans Day Poster Contest

Veterans Day - November 11



Calling all artists! The 2017 National Veterans Day Poster Contest is underway. Each year the VA's National Veterans Outreach Office, in conjunction with the Veterans Day National Committee, publishes a commemorative [Veterans Day poster](#). The poster is selected from artwork submitted by artists nationwide and is distributed to VA facilities, military installations around the world across cities and town in our nation. It also serves as the cover of the official program for the Veterans Day Observance at Arlington National Cemetery.

Over the years these posters have illustrated the rich history of our country's service men and women. The poster clearly reflects our pride and patriotism in saluting Veterans while providing the thematic artistry for the year.

Poster guidelines, submissions must:

- Be 18" x 24" at 300 dots per inch, scale down submissions to 9"x12."
- Submissions are not restricted to "human centric" presentations, such as a joint color guard. Imagery of American icons, monuments or scenery can qualify, for example, the American flag.
- Represent Veterans from all branches of service. The Committee may select a particular submission but ask the artist to make modifications to the original design. Additional changes may be required prior to printing.
- Reflect the diversity of our Veteran and military population in terms of race, gender and disability status.

Cont. next page

- Include sufficient information to demonstrate that the image is the work of the artist and is not copyrighted material (i.e. photos and concepts).
- To view examples of past winning submissions visit [the VA Veterans Day poster gallery](#).

Submit electronic versions as .jpg images or PDF files by email to vetsday@va.gov or send copies of artwork on a CD with artwork files to:

Veterans Day National Committee

Department of Veterans Affairs
ATTN: Micheal Migliara (002D)
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

The deadline for submissions is April 15. A selection committee will convene in May 2017 to review submissions and make a final selection.

Questions should be directed to the Veterans Day Coordinator at vetsday@va.gov or find out [more online by clicking here](#).

DID YOU KNOW?

- A rhinoceros horn is made of compacted hair.
- The shortest war in history was between Zanzibar and England in 1896. Zanzibar surrendered after 38 minutes.
- A polar bear's skin is black. Its fur is not white, but actually clear.

QUOTABLE

"We like a man to come right out and say what he thinks – if we agree with him."

-Mark Twain



Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans invites you to participate in a:

FREE DROP-IN LEGAL CLINIC FOR VETERANS

**HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, BENEFITS, DEBT COLLECTION,
EXPUNGEMENT, FAMILY LAW INCLUDING CHILD SUPPORT**

Tuesday, April 18, 2017 | 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
St. Cloud VA HCS | Auditorium - Building 8
4801 Veterans Drive | St. Cloud, MN 56303

Attorneys, MACV staff, County Veterans Service Officers, and child support officers will be available throughout the day to assist veterans with questions, legal forms, and counsel.

For more information contact: Vetlaw Program – MACV | 651-200-4750



VA Dental Insurance Pilot Program Extended for Enrolled Veterans

Beginning in 2014, VA piloted the [VA Dental Insurance Program](#) (VADIP), which provided an opportunity for certain eligible Veterans and their beneficiaries to purchase dental insurance from private insurance companies at a discounted rate. That program was slated to end Jan. 31, but a [law](#) passed in the summer of 2016 allows already enrolled Veterans to keep their insurance. The legislation also keeps the program funded through 2021.

VADIP offers Veterans enrolled in the VA health care system, as well as beneficiaries and their dependents of the [Civilian Health and Medical Program of the VA \(CHAMPVA\)](#), the opportunity to purchase discounted insurance from private dental insurers. Coverage includes diagnostic services, preventive services, endodontic and other restorative services, surgical services and emergency services. As of December 2016, 103,231 Veterans were enrolled in VADIP.

To establish the reauthorized program, VA must enter into new contracts with insurance providers to administer the insurance program.

“The new [VADIP](#) contract process is proceeding,” said Venis M. Whitfield, associate director of the Member Services Health Eligibility Center Member Benefits Section. “Enrollment in the pilot program ended Jan. 31, 2017, but individuals already enrolled in VADIP will automatically receive coverage for 12 months.”

VADIP was established as a pilot program by the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010. Customer-service survey results indicated that more than 92 percent of participants would renew in the program, indicating a strong overall satisfaction with the program.

For more information, visit <http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/VADIP> or call 877-222-VETS (8387).

VA to Provide Fertility Counseling and Treatment For Certain Veterans and Spouses

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced earlier this year that it is amending its regulation regarding fertility counseling and treatment available to eligible Veterans and spouses. VA currently provides certain infertility services other than in vitro fertilization (IVF) services to Veterans as part of the medical benefits package. This interim final rule authorizes IVF for a Veteran with a service-connected disability that results in the inability of the Veteran to procreate without the use of fertility treatment. It also states that VA may provide fertility counseling and treatment using assisted reproductive technologies (ART), including IVF, to a spouse of a Veteran with a service-connected disability that results in the inability of the Veteran to procreate without the use of fertility treatment.

“I have always believed that one of the main responsibilities of a grateful nation is to make whole the men and women who have made sacrifices on our behalf,” said former VA Secretary Bob McDonald. “It is important that we fully understand the needs of our Veteran population, and incorporate the major scientific advances available today that can allow them to live a full life. Providing fertility counseling and treatment, including in vitro fertilization, is consistent with VA’s goal of restoring reproductive capabilities of Veterans and improving the quality of their lives.”

As part of the medical benefits package, VA provides many different types of fertility treatments and procedures to Veterans. These include infertility counseling, laboratory blood testing, surgical correction of structural pathology, reversal of a vasectomy or tubal ligation, medication, and various other diagnostic studies or treatments and procedures.

Full implementation of this regulation requires that VA utilize and optimize existing capabilities for care in the community and develop internal processes that will provide Veterans with a seamless path to receiving ART services. Veterans can immediately schedule appointments with their local health care system for eligibility determinations, clinical evaluation and consultation, and initial treatment as we work to build this structure.



FEDERAL REGISTER
The Daily Journal of the United States Government

The interim final rule was published in the *Federal Register* on January 19, 2017 and can be accessed [here](#). Although the interim rule references September 30, 2017 as the date the funding expires, the funds are authorized through September 30, 2018.

Huntington's Disease

May is Huntington's Disease Awareness Month. Huntington's disease (HD) is an inherited disorder that causes degeneration of brain cells, called neurons, in motor control regions of the brain, as well as other areas. Symptoms of the disease, which gets progressively worse, include uncontrolled movements (called chorea), abnormal body postures, and changes in behavior, emotion, judgment, and cognition. People with HD also develop impaired coordination, slurred speech, and difficulty feeding and swallowing. HD typically begins between ages 30 and 50. An earlier onset form called juvenile HD, occurs under age 20. Symptoms of juvenile HD differ somewhat from adult onset HD and include unsteadiness, rigidity, difficulty at school, and seizures. More than 30,000 Americans have HD.

Huntington's disease is caused by a mutation in the gene for a protein called huntingtin. The defect causes the cytosine, adenine, and guanine (CAG) building blocks of DNA to repeat many more times than is normal. Each child of a parent with HD has a 50-50 chance of inheriting the HD gene. If a child does not inherit the HD gene, he or she will not develop the disease and generally cannot pass it to subsequent generations. There is a small risk that someone who has a parent with the mutated gene but who did not inherit the HD gene may pass a possibly harmful genetic sequence to her/his children. A person who inherits the HD gene will eventually develop the disease. A genetic test, coupled with a complete medical history and neurological and laboratory tests, helps physicians diagnose HD.

Huntington's disease causes disability that gets worse over time. People with this disease usually die within 15 to 20 years following diagnosis. At this time, no treatment is available to slow, stop or reverse the course of HD.

Tetrabenazine is prescribed for treating Huntington's-associated chorea. It is the only drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration specifically for use against HD. Antipsychotic drugs may help to alleviate chorea and may also be used to help control hallucinations, delusions, and violent outbursts. Drugs may be prescribed to treat depression and anxiety. Drugs used to treat the symptoms of HD may have side effects such as fatigue, sedation, decreased concentration, restlessness, or hyperexcitability, and should be only used when symptoms create problems for the individual.

**Huntington's Disease Affects
the Brain's Basal Ganglia**



June is Hernia Awareness Month

What Is a Hernia?

A hernia (or “rupture”) is a weakness or defect in the wall of the abdomen. This weakness may be present at birth. Or, it can be caused by the wear and tear of daily living. If left untreated, a hernia can get worse with time and physical stress.

When a Bulge Forms

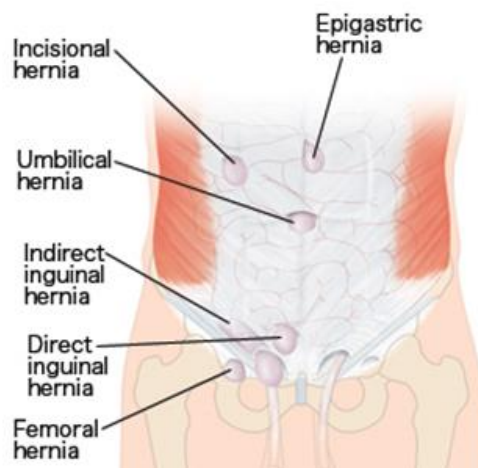
A weak area in the abdominal wall allows the contents of the abdomen to push outward. This often causes a noticeable bulge under the skin. The bulge may get bigger when you stand and go away when you lie down. You may also feel pressure or discomfort when lifting, coughing, urinating, or doing other activities.

Type of Hernia

The type of hernia you have depends on its location. Most hernias form in the groin at or near the **internal ring**. This is the entrance to a canal between the abdomen and groin. Hernias can also occur in the abdomen, thigh, or genitals.

Types of Hernias

- An **incisional hernia** occurs at the site of a previous surgical incision.
- An **umbilical hernia** occurs at the navel.
- An **indirect inguinal hernia** occurs in the groin at the internal ring.
- A **direct inguinal hernia** occurs in the groin near the internal ring.
- A **femoral hernia** occurs just below the groin.
- An **epigastric hernia** occurs in the upper abdomen at the midline.



Surgery: The Best Treatment

A hernia will not heal on its own. Surgery is needed to repair the defect in the abdominal wall. If not treated, a hernia can get larger. It can also lead to serious medical complications. The good news is that hernia surgery can be done quickly and safely. In most cases, you can go home the same day as your surgery.

Recipe for Health

Elegant Potatoes

INGREDIENTS:

2 lbs. frozen hash browns, defrosted	1 tsp. salt
½ pt. low fat sour cream	¼ tsp. salt
½ c. softened margarine	1 c. low fat milk
2 c. low fat shredded cheddar cheese	¼ c. finely chopped onion
1 can low fat, low sodium cream of chicken soup	

Directions:

Mix all together and put in a 9 x 13-inch baking dish. Top with 2 or 2½ cups crushed cornflakes and ¼ cup softened margarine (put in sealed baggie and crush). Bake at 350° for 45 minutes. Serves 12.

Nutritional Information:

277 calories, 18.3g fat, 8.2g protein, 861mg sodium, 20.8g carbohydrates

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